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DD/674-1715

DD/M&S 74-1249

E.R. # 73-5382

11 APR 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
THROUGH : Executive Assistant to the Director
FROM : Deputy Director for Management and Services
SUBJECT : Amendment to OSS Declassification Guidelines

1. Action Requested: Approval of change to "Guidelines for Declassification of Office of Strategic Services Records," transmitted to the Archivist of the United States by DCI letter of 16 May 1973.

2. Background: The extant guidelines prohibit the declassification of documents which identify individuals who subsequently served with US intelligence organizations, unless their affiliation with the OSS had been established in open source literature. In practical application, this restriction has been invoked only for individuals who have served with SSU, CIG, or the CIA inasmuch as reviewing officers have no way of knowing whether OSS veterans have worked for other intelligence organizations. While such documents retain their classified status, National Archives personnel are given authorization to release the documents to requesters after having sanitized the records by excision of names.

The existence of this restriction necessitates a page-by-page review of all documents, thereby ruling out the possibility of blanket declassification of otherwise non-sensitive record series or groups. (Such authority has been requested by NARS for the World War II records of the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service and the records of the Interdepartmental Committee for the Acquisition of Foreign Publications. The latter records are a part of NARS' OSS/R&A holdings; the former records are not OSS records--FBIS was under the FCC during World War II--but the same principle would apply.)

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Quite apart from the declassification workload factor, it is questionable whether the policy of protecting the former OSS affiliation of CIA employees is either effective or necessary. The fact that an individual served with the OSS does not, or should not, automatically make him suspect. Of the approximately 20,000 veterans, less than 1,000 wound up with the Agency--and more than half of these are now separated, often in an overt status. Moreover, it is apparent that many Agency employees who served with the OSS have made no effort to conceal that fact when questioned concerning their World War II activities.

The effort to conceal the former OSS affiliation of CIA employees by deleting their names from documents may have the opposite effect from that intended. It is entirely possible that the requester's curiosity could be stimulated to the point that he would make a determined effort to discover what had been excised. And he might very well be successful in this endeavor, particularly if, as is often the case, the individual whose name was removed had served as a member of a team and the other team members were identified in the document. A number of avenues are open to an enterprising researcher. He might be able to determine the identity of "X" by contacting other team members, by uncovering references in open literature, or by gaining access to other related OSS records (they "pop up" in university libraries and elsewhere) which enumerate the entire membership of the group. The end result would be that the Agency, in withholding an individual's name in order to protect his current intelligence connections, raised suspicion and increased the risk of exposure.

3. Recommendation: It is recommended that, in the interest of expediting the declassification review of OSS records and in view of the dubious wisdom of the current policy, the OSS declassification guidelines be changed to no longer require the protection of identities of OSS non-agent personnel merely on the basis of subsequent service with the CIA.

/s/ Harold L. Brownman

HAROLD L. BROWNMAN
Deputy Director
for
Management and Services

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CONCUR:

Deputy Director for Operations

APPROVED:

SI W.E. Colby 16 Apr. 1974

DISAPPROVED:

Distribution:

Orig. - Addressee, Return to ISAS

- 1 - DDCI
- 1 - ER
- 2 - DDM&S *(signature)*
- 1 - DDO
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ISAS:CES:slh
(3 April 1974)

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10 April 1974

NOTE FOR: Mr. Brownman via Mr. Blake

Under ordinary circumstances I would suggest a re-write of this memo, particularly since some of the paragraphs go into the rationale or staff position rather than pure "background." The current policy was established by Mr. Colby and it seems a little unwise to refer to the "dubious wisdom" of the present approach. However, I don't perceive any problem from a substantive standpoint, the proposal has been coordinated with Dave Blee, and I recommend DD/M&S signature.



LJD

Att: DD/M&S 74-1249

DDM & S

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

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7D5615 HQS.

4/12/74 4/12/74

W

4. Director of Central
Intelligence

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4/18/74

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Mr Braumman for Blake
briefed 4/18/74

6. C/ISAS
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